



News for Immediate Release

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Final Snow Survey of 2012 Set for May 1

SACRAMENTO -- The Department of Water Resources (DWR) will conduct this year's fifth and final snow survey on May 1.

One focus of media attention will be the manual survey scheduled for 11 a.m. off Highway 50 near Echo Summit about 90 miles east of Sacramento.

Manual surveys up and down the state will be combined with electronic readings from remote sensors to indicate the rate at which the mountain snowpack is melting into the state's streams, reservoirs and aquifers.

The snowpack normally provides about a third of the water for California's homes, industry and agriculture. April 2 measurements showed that water content in the winter snowpack -- often called California's frozen reservoir -- was only 55 percent of normal at the time of year when it historically is at its peak. Today, it is 46 percent of normal.

Above average reservoir storage is the good news for water supply this year. With Lake Oroville in Butte County -- the State Water Project's principal storage reservoir -- 93 percent full (113 percent of normal for the date), DWR expects to be able to deliver a not unusually low 60 percent of the slightly more than 4 million acre-feet of SWP water requested.

DWR will collect manual snowpack water content readings over the next several days. In the interim, real-time electronic readings indicate that snowpack water content is 76 percent of normal in the northern mountain ranges, 43 percent of

normal in the central Sierra, and 26 percent of normal in the southern Sierra. The statewide reading is 46 percent.

The news media is welcome to accompany DWR snow surveyors near Echo Summit on May 1. Reporters and photographers driving to the site -- Phillips Station at Highway 50 and Sierra at Tahoe Road approximately 90 miles east of Sacramento -- should park along Highway 50 and are advised to bring snowshoes or cross-country skis. Results should be available by 1 p.m.

Electronic snowpack readings are available on the Internet at:

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/DLYSWEQ>

Electronic reservoir level readings may be found at:

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cdecapp/resapp/getResGraphsMain.action>

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.